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4. — *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, comprising portions of his Diary from 1795 to 1848.* Edited by CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS. Vol. I. Philadelphia. J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1874.

THE first instalment of this long-expected Journal has at last appeared. During the lifetime of Mr. John Quincy Adams, it was generally understood that he had been in the habit of keeping a daily record of his life from a very early date, and a natural curiosity was felt to know what was in it. The story ran that he had directed its publication to be delayed for twenty years after his death, which naturally only whetted the desire to see it. Mr. Charles Adams makes no mention in his Preface of any such injunction, and very likely it had no foundation. There is certainly nothing in this volume that might not have been published in Mr. Adams's lifetime. His strictures on the conduct, and his comments on the characters, of his contemporaries, during the period of which it treats, are all within the just limits of fair criticism, and most of the subjects of them had long preceded him to the other world. But it is quite likely that, as the story approaches later times, his strong opinions may have been so strongly expressed as to make the interposition of a generation of years between their recording and their publication a matter of wise expediency, if not of necessity.

We apprehend that the first feeling of the readers of the Journal will be one of disappointment. And this partly from this very absence of strong personal criticism as well as of gossiping anecdotes of society and manners. Indeed, the general reader hardly knew what to expect; and when the book so long looked for was actually before him, it was hardly possible that it should not fall short of his indefinite anticipations. But this was very unreasonable. Any one who had any knowledge of Mr. Adams, either personally or by authentic description, would expect to find very much what he meets with in the pages of his Journal. A serious narrative of the events of each day with solid comments upon them, sketches of his studies, glimpses all too few and too brief at his domestic interior, occasional sittings in judgment upon himself, in which he shows small mercy to what he esteems his moral or intellectual shortcomings,—these, it might have been foreseen, would have made up the daily record of the days of such a man. The Journal is certainly not an entertaining one, but to our sense it is deeply interesting as a picture of the daily inner and outer life of so eminent a man. Indiscretion and thoughtlessness are essential elements of an entertaining journal.

The writer must have amusing things to tell, and be entirely unscrupulous in the telling them. Either he must believe that no other eyes than his will ever read what he writes, or he must not care whether they do or not. The moment the thought of what other people may think of what he says occurs to him half the grace is gone. It is the same with letter-writing. We shall have no more of the exquisite letters of former days. The careless graces, the delightful nothings, the airy gossip, the delicious trifling, the commonplaces stamped with immortality, the tiresome and the stupid whom genius has preserved in its own amber for our diversion, — it will be a lucky chance if we ever have them again. Every one who knows or believes that posterity will care anything about him, feels that posterity is looking over his shoulder as he writes. It will be the worse for posterity. We should never have had Madame de Sevigné or Lady Mary or Cowper, had they suspected us of doing anything of the kind. It is needless to say that Mr. Adams's Journal is marked by none of these excellent qualities of carelessness, indiscretion, recklessness, and levity. We fear he began rather early to believe that he was providing materials for the history of his time. Such as he has given us, let us take it as it is and be thankful.

There is something curiously interesting in the process by which Mr. Adams was fitted for his career in life. Nothing could well be further removed from the ordinary preparation of men regularly educated for professional and public life, unless it were from that of the fearfully and wonderfully "self-made" men with whom the inscrutable dispensations of Providence have visited our afflicted country in these latter days. His political education may be said to date from the day his mother led him up Penn's Hill to hear the cannonade of Bunker's Hill and to see the smoke of Charlestown relieved against the blue sky of that summer's day. Nothing could well be more desultory, apparently, than his strictly literary education, from the morning he embarked in Nantasket Roads for Europe with his father when eleven years old, in 1778, until he went to Harvard in 1786. But the authority of his father and the influence of Franklin doubtless helped to form those habits of application and that love of study which enabled him to make good the deficiencies of his actual teaching by a true self-education. There is something in his boyish and youthful career singularly interesting. Arriving in France on the first of April, 1778 (which the types have changed to 1779), he narrowly escaped seeing Voltaire, and did actually see Marie Antoinette in the full pride of her beauty, about the time when Burke saw in her the loveliest vision that ever lighted on this planet. And he lived

in daily communication with Franklin, with whom, at a later day, he used to play billiards every morning. Mr. Adams's schooling was soon interrupted by his first return to America, and, though resumed on his father's speedy resumption of his functions, lasted less than six months at Paris. Four months at the Latin school of Amsterdam and five at the University of Leyden comprised the whole of his regular teaching until he went to Cambridge in 1786. When fourteen years old, his diplomatic education began under the eye of Mr. Dana, afterwards the Chief Justice of Massachusetts, at St. Petersburg, to whom he acted as secretary at that early age, his familiarity with the French language well qualifying him for the duties of the post. After leaving St. Petersburg, in 1782, he acted in Paris as an additional secretary to the Commissioners who were negotiating the Peace of 1783. The extracts from his Journal at this time, when he was but sixteen years old, are of the true nature of good journalizing, and we are sorry that the editor has not given us a great many more of them.

When his father was appointed minister to England, young Adams came to the wise determination of returning to America, which he expresses in terms which show the early maturity of his judgment:—

“After having been travelling for these seven years almost all over Europe, and having been in the world, and among company, for three; to return to spend one or two years in the pale of a College, subjected to all the rules which I have so long been freed from; then to plunge into the dry and tedious study of the Law for three years; and afterwards not expect (however good an opinion I may have of myself) to bring myself into notice under three or four years more; if ever! It is really a prospect somewhat discouraging for a youth of my ambition (for I have ambition, though I hope its object is laudable). But still

‘Oh! how wretched

Is that poor Man that hangs on Princes' favors’

or on those of anybody else. I am determined that so long as I shall be able to get my own living in an honorable manner, I will depend upon no one. My Father has been so much taken up all his lifetime with the interests of the public, that his own fortune has suffered by it; so that his children will have to provide for themselves, which I shall never be able to do, if I loiter away my precious time in Europe and shun going home until I am forced to it. With an ordinary share of common sense, which I hope I enjoy, at least in America I can live *independent* and *free*; and rather than live otherwise I would wish to die before the time when I shall be left to my own discretion. I have before me a striking example of the distressing and humiliating situation a person is reduced to by adopting a different line of conduct, and I am determined not to fall into the same error.” — p. 21.

Returned to America, he soon entered Harvard University at the last term of the Junior year, and virtually stood at the head of his

class at its graduation in 1787. The authorities of the College, doubtless thinking it hard that a youth who had borne so light a part of the burden and heat of college life should supersede the one who had endured the whole and would regularly have received the English Oration, which was the highest academic honor, introduced the innovation of a Second Oration, which was assigned to Mr. Adams, an arrangement which probably satisfied all parties. After graduating and studying the law, he opened an office in Boston and awaited the advent of clients. As his leisure was not much more disturbed by the *turba clientium* than that of young lawyers generally, he luckily turned it to the best account for his future success by writing political articles for the newspapers. The newspapers of those days were small and few in comparison with those of the present day, but their actual influence and practical importance were much greater. Dr. Franklin, somewhere speaking of the multiplication of newspapers in this country during his lifetime, says with obvious satisfaction that, at the time he wrote, there were not less than *twenty-five* newspapers printed in the United States, — a number which he thought would supply the necessities of the country for many years to come. Droll as such a statement may seem to us now, it is not doubtful that the positive influence of the periodical press of eighty or ninety years ago was greater on the public mind of that day, than that exercised on the opinion of to-day by our contemporary prints, whose name is Legion. Thomas Paine (commonly called of men Tom) had just published his once famous “Rights of Man” in England, as a reply to Burke’s “Thoughts on the French Revolution,” and it had been reprinted in Philadelphia with the emphatic indorsement of Mr. Jefferson. Mr. Adams made this work the occasion of a series of articles in the “Columbian Centinel,” signed “Publicola,” and afterwards discussed the various political topics of that exciting time, when the French Revolution was in full and fiery blast, under the signatures of “Marcellus” and “Columbus.” The first-named series of essays in particular excited great attention, not only in this country but on the other side of the Atlantic, having been reprinted in London, in Glasgow, and in Dublin. And it is a curious circumstance that these last-named editions were never known to the writer, nor to the editor until seventy years after their publication, when he accidentally met with copies during his diplomatic residence in England. These political writings changed the course of his future career, as they were the occasion of his first introduction to the public service before he had completed his twenty-seventh year.

For President Washington had been so much struck by their merit

that in May, 1794, he sent in to the Senate the name of John Quincy Adams as minister to Holland, without consultation with his father, then Vice-President. No doubt this appointment was due in part to a wish on the part of General Washington to gratify his friend the Vice-President, but it certainly never would have been made had he not been fully satisfied of the fitness of the young diplomatist for the post. Mr. Adams's Journal describing his visit to Philadelphia to procure his credentials, dining in New York on the way in company with Talleyrand, and afterwards in England *en route* for the Hague, is animated and entertaining, and carries us along with him as a journal should do. In London he of course forthwith visited Mr. Jay, then engaged in negotiating his famous treaty. There he was astonished by a piece of news, indeed of an astounding nature. He says :—

“ . . . Mr. Jay asked me whether the death of Robespierre was known in America before I sailed. I repeated with utter astonishment, ‘Robespierre dead!’ more times than was perfectly decent, and could scarcely believe I had heard right, until he assured me very seriously that about six weeks or two months since Robespierre, with a considerable number of his partisans, were accused, tried, condemned and executed by a party of Moderates who had succeeded to his power.”

Alas, the ocean telegraph, which tells us everything the moment that it happens, if not before, has made impossible any such delightful surprises to us! The period on which Mr. Adams's mission to Holland fell was almost precisely that of the French occupation by Pichegru. His presentation to the Stadtholder was almost immediately followed by the flight of that prince, and his subsequent transactions were with the authorities of the Batavian Republic, the name under which the old United Provinces were permitted to disguise from themselves the humiliating fact that they were virtually but a department of France. His Journal, during the whole of his Dutch residence, though it records no affairs of particular consequence with which he had to do officially, is very good reading as a running commentary on current events, and a description of the diplomatic and private society of Holland. In October, 1795, Mr. Adams was directed by the Washington Administration to go over to London to exchange the Ratifications of Jay's Treaty. Owing to various delays he did not arrive in season to perform this duty, but he was received by Lord Grenville and presented at Court as Minister Resident at the Hague. For some reason, it is not very clear what, unless it were the belief that so young a diplomatist might be easily manipulated, Lord Grenville wished Mr. Adams to assume the character and func-

tions of minister to St. James's. Of course, nothing of the sort could be done, and when it was certain that he could not be used for whatever object the attempt was made, his treatment became less and less flattering. Lord Grenville forgot his first engagement to present him at Court, which could hardly be well-pleasing to the carnal man of Mr. Adams. The following brief entries tell the story of his interviews with royalty. He goes to the levee on the 9th of December, 1795, and he tells the rest of the story thus : —

“ After the Levee was over I was introduced into the private closet of the King by Lord Grenville, and, presenting my credential Letter, said, ‘ Sir, to testify to your Majesty the sincerity of the United States of America in their negotiations, their President has directed me to take the necessary measures connected with the Ratifications of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation concluded between your Majesty and the United States. He has authorized me to deliver to your Majesty this Letter, and I ask your Majesty’s permission to add, on their part, the assurance of the sincerity of their intentions.’ He then said, ‘ To give you my answer, Sir, I am very happy to have the assurances of their sincerity, for without that, you know, there would be no such thing as dealings among men.’ He afterwards asked to which of the States I belonged, and on my answering, Massachusetts, he turned to Lord Grenville and said, ‘ All the Adamses belong to Massachusetts?’ To which Lord Grenville answered, they did. He enquired whether my father was now Governor of Massachusetts. I answered, ‘ No, Sir; he is Vice-President of the United States.’ ‘ Ay,’ said he, ‘ and he cannot hold both offices at the same time?’ ‘ No, Sir.’ He asked where my father is now. ‘ At Philadelphia, Sir, I presume, the Congress being now in session.’ ‘ When do they meet?’ ‘ The first week in December, Sir.’ ‘ And where did you come from last?’ ‘ From Holland, Sir.’ ‘ You have been employed there?’ ‘ Yes, Sir, about a year.’ ‘ Have you been employed before, and anywhere else?’ ‘ No, Sir.’” — pp. 162, 163.

“ 17th. Went with Mr. Cottrell to the Drawing Room. Presented to the Queen as Minister Resident of the United States of America at the Hague. Asked me how long I had been in Holland, and whether I was any relation to the Mr. Adams that was here some years ago. The King asked me whether our winters were not more severe than they are here.” — p. 165.

“ *January 13th, 1796.* Attended the Levee. Saw Mr. Morris there. Heard of Mr. Pinckney’s arrival. Mr. Hammond at the Levee too. The King did not speak to me. My reception at Court this day contrasted completely with those on former occasions, when I was to be cajoled into compliance. I valued it much more highly; it flattered my pride as much as the former fawning malice humbled it.”

“ 14th. Morning papers say that I took leave of the King at the Levee yesterday, introduced by Lord Grenville, and that I am upon my return home. I suppose it is meant as a hint to me to go away. I can certainly

henceforth do no good here. But I cannot well go without receiving further orders from home." — p. 167.

He had, however, some more amusing experiences in London than his dealings with royalty and the Foreign Office. He seems to have improved his opportunities to see the good acting at Drury Lane and Covent Garden in those best days of the London stage. Mrs. Siddons, John Kemble, Mrs. Jordan, Jack Bannister, Dicky Suett (here misspelt Swett), Munden, Quick, some of them the Old Actors whom Charles Lamb has made immortal, made a pleasant variety after the talks with Lord Grenville and Mr. Hammond, his under-secretary, not long returned from this country to which he had been the first and most unpleasant British minister. Who knows but Charles Lamb, with his sister Mary, may have fought his desperate way to the Shilling Gallery on one of those nights, an unsuspected immortal? Here is another noticeable morning soon after his arrival:—

"Mr. Deas and Mr. Bayard called at about twelve. Went with them and Mr. Vaughan to see Mr. Ireland, and saw several of his manuscripts which, he assures, have been lately discovered, and are original from the hand of Shakespear? They are deeds, billets, a love-letter to Anna Hatheway with a lock of hair, designs done with a pen, a fair copy of Lear, three or four sheets of a Hamlet, and a tragedy, hitherto unknown, of Vortigern and Rowena. The last we did not see, as unfortunately some company came, to which Mr. Ireland was obliged to attend, and we accordingly took our leave. The marks of authenticity borne by the manuscripts are very considerable, but this matter will be like to occasion as great a literary controversy as the supposed poems of Rowley and those of Ossian have done. They will be published in the course of a few weeks; and the play of Vortigern is to appear upon the Drury Lane stage. Sheridan has given five hundred pounds for it." — p. 133.

The editor is mistaken in the opinion he expresses in a note to this passage, that "this literary imposture, like that of Chatterton, has passed into oblivion with later generations." On the contrary, a fac-simile edition has just been published in New York, by Mr. J. W. Bouton, with an introduction by that eminent Shakespearian scholar, Mr. Richard Grant White. And it is scarcely fair to class the bungling forgeries of Ireland, which have nothing to recommend them but their impudence, with those of "the marvellous boy who perished in his pride," which have established themselves by their genius in the permanent literature of the language.

One thing in particular struck us as remarkable in reading the Journal of Mr. Adams's residence of nearly six months in England, and that in a recognized diplomatic character, that he seems to have

received almost no civilities from those in authority. He mentions no invitations to dinner or attentions of any kind, and it does not appear, from what is given us, that he ever met, or even saw, the great men of that interesting period. He hardly could have made the acquaintance of such men as Pitt and Fox and Burke and Sheridan and Windham and Grey and Erskine, without making some record of the circumstance, and if he had, his son would hardly have omitted the passages in this work. The unpleasant inference seems to be inevitable that the United States, and they that represented them, occupied but a small space in the thoughts of English public men, excepting under the pressure of actual business. The only person of any importance with whom he is recorded as having dined was worthy Sir John Sinclair, of agricultural and statistical memory, the correspondent of Washington and a steady friend of America. The account is perhaps worth extracting. It is a little curious that Mr. Adams seems never before to have heard of Count Rumford, considering he was a countryman of his own, and had been somewhat notorious during the Revolution, though on the wrong side, both in the cabinet and the field.

" 22d. Went with Dr. Edwards, and dined with Sir John Sinclair. The company were a Captain Sinclair, Dr. Percy, Mr. Boswell (not Peter's Bozzy), Sir John McPherson, a Count Rumford, heretofore known by the name of Sir Benjamin Thompson, Mr. Marshall, and Arthur Young, both writers on subjects of Agriculture, and one or two other gentlemen unknown to me. The convivial hours of scientific men are known to be little more instructive than those of humbler pretensions. The conversation was miscellaneous: philosophical, political, and literary. We had some bread made of one-third rice and two-thirds wheat, which I could not have distinguished from fine wheat bread; some water impregnated with fixed air, &c. The Count, who wears a blue ribband, and who has doubtless made philosophy a means for his advancement, told me that he had met with nothing that flattered him more than his having been elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; that he had taken it as a very honorable testimony of the liberality of Americans, and that he retained a great regard and attachment to that country. He mentioned his design of applying a sum of money, the interest of which is to be made an annual premium to be given by the American Academy for the best paper on the subject of Light and Heat. He has applied a similar sum for the same purpose to the Royal Society, of which he is also a member. Sir John McPherson and Dr. Percy made a number of very sensible observations. They both declared their opinion that the manuscripts of Mr. Ireland were unquestionably genuine, but they both expressed an opinion as to the composition of the small papers, and particularly of that called the profession of faith, higher than I think they deserve. Mr. Young appeared neither more nor less than a thick-and-

thin political partisan, and such as might be expected from his last pamphlet, — somewhat dogmatical and impatient of contradiction. Sir John Sinclair himself was more politically reserved.”

But we must hasten on. Returning to the Hague in May, 1796, he remained there until July, 1797. In the interval his father had been elected President, and they both seem to have felt a very unnecessary delicacy — quite incomprehensible to their more robust successors — about his continuing to hold his office under these changed circumstances. But General Washington removed their scruples by a letter to President Adams strongly urging him to retain and promote his son in the diplomatic line, adding, “I give it as my decided opinion that Mr. Adams is the most valuable public character we have abroad, and that he will prove himself to be the ablest of all our diplomatic corps.” In the summer of 1797, having just made the fortunate marriage which was the chief happiness of the rest of his life, he received from his father the appointment of minister to Prussia, and forthwith proceeded to Berlin, where he remained until the defeat of his father, and the accession of Mr. Jefferson in 1801. He negotiated a satisfactory treaty with Prussia, the one made by Frederick the Great having expired by its own limitation. Here he was in constant association with diplomatic and native society of higher rank and more public and social consequence than that he had fallen in with in Holland. The most interesting among these was Mr. Hugh Elliot, the eccentric and witty English minister who had had the rare satisfaction of snubbing the great Frederick to his face. As when the king, by way of affront to England, sent a minister of a rank and character quite beneath what a great power had a right to expect, and sneeringly asked Mr. Elliot what was thought of him in England, he replied, “A fitting representative of your Majesty!” *Comme digne représentant de Votre Majesté!* And when Frederick asked him insultingly who this Hyder Ali was that was beating you English so badly in India; he answered, “Sire, he is an old despot who has plundered all his neighbors, but who, thank God, is beginning to dote!”* Elliot said it was a revenge worthy of Satan. This is his own explanation of an act of which he has usually had to bear the blame.

“Paid a visit to Mr. Elliot. Found him confined with a headache. Had a long conversation with him. In the course of it he took occasion to speak of the robbery of Arthur Lee’s papers during the American war, which has

* *Sire, c’est un vieux despote qui a pillé tous ses voisins, mais qui, Dieu merci ! commence à radoter !* See Lady Minto’s entertaining Life of him.

always been imputed to him. He declared solemnly that he did not order it; that it was entirely the work of a servant, through whom the papers were brought to him. He did not read them; that the only papers of consequence he found were the draft of an unfinished Treaty with Spain, and a letter from Frederic the Second, or one of his Ministers, promising, if any other power would set the example of acknowledging the independence of the United States, that he would be the second to do it. He was very much offended at the transaction, and Mr. Elliot was obliged to send the man who had committed the robbery privately out of the country."

Mr. Adams spoke of Mr. Elliot with more freedom than in his Journal in a series of private letters which he wrote to his brother when on a tour in Silesia, which were printed in the Portfolio of Joseph Dennie at Philadelphia, and afterwards reprinted in England, and translated into French and German; and not only the English minister, but sundry other of his acquaintances, learned what he thought of them through this unauthorized publication. The editor tells us, however, that these parties either bore no malice, or had forgotten the circumstance when he met them twenty years later.

When the election of Mr. Jefferson was ascertained, President Adams recalled his son from Berlin, who soon established himself as a practising lawyer in Boston. He was at the ensuing State election placed in the Senate of Massachusetts, and was a candidate for Congress the year after, without success. The voting was very close in those days in the Boston District, which then included a large part of Norfolk County; and Dr. Eustis, afterwards Secretary of War and Governor of Massachusetts, had carried it for the two or three previous terms. Mr. Adams had, however, to encounter some share of the prejudice felt by the Federalists against his father; and he had injured himself politically, undoubtedly, by proposing in the Senate, when the election of councillors came on, to give some of them to the Democrats. This not only helped his defeat as Representative, but made his election as United States Senator, the next year, hang long in the balance. At the seventh ballot he had 86 votes out of 171, being the exact number necessary for his election. His Journal when in Washington testifies to the diligence with which he attended to his public duties, with occasional glances at society and individuals. Mr. Jefferson comes in for his share of these notices. Of course, there could be no cordiality at first between Mr. Adams and his father's successful competitor, but the civilities of formal intercourse were observed. He dined at the White House one day, and made this note of the conversation with the President:—

"I had a good deal of conversation with the President. The French

Minister just arrived had been this day first presented to him, and appears to have displeased him by the profusion of gold lace on his clothes. He says they must get him down to a plain frock coat, or the boys in the streets will run after him as a sight. I asked if he had brought his *Imperial* credentials, and was answered he had. Mr. Jefferson then turned the conversation towards the French Revolution, and remarked how *contrary to all expectation* this great *bouleversement* had turned out. It seemed as if everything in that country for the last twelve or fifteen years had been A DREAM; and who could have imagined that such an *ébranlement* would have come to this? He thought it very much to be wished that they could now return to the Constitution of 1789, and call back *the Old Family*. For although by that Constitution the Government was much too weak, and although it was defective in having a Legislature in only one branch, yet even thus it was better than the present form, where it was impossible to perceive *any limits*. I have used as near as possible his very words; for this is one of the most unexpected phases in the waxing and waning opinions of this gentleman concerning the French Revolution."

These were curious admissions from the reputed godfather of the National Assembly and the enthusiastic sympathizer with the French Revolution. Mr. Adams continues:—

"He further observed that both French and Spanish ought to be made primary objects of acquisition in all the educations of our young men. As to Spanish, it was so easy that he had learned it, with the help of a Don Quixote lent him by Mr. Cabot, and a grammar, in the course of a passage to Europe, on which he was but nineteen days at sea. But Mr. Jefferson tells large stories. At table he told us that when he was at Marseilles he saw there a Mr. Bergasse, a famous manufacturer of wines, who told him that he would make him any sort of wine he would name, and in any quantities, at six or eight sols the bottle. And though there should not be a drop of the genuine wine required in his composition, yet it should so perfectly imitate the taste, that the most refined connoisseur should not be able to tell which was which. You never can be an hour in this man's company without something of the marvellous, like these stories. His genius is of the old French school. It conceives better than it combines."— pp. 316, 317.

At another time he records of Mr. Jefferson:—

"His itch for telling prodigies, however, is unabated. Speaking of the cold, he said he had seen Fahrenheit's thermometer, *in Paris*, at twenty degrees below zero; and that, not for a single day, but that for six weeks together it stood *thereabouts*. 'Never once in the whole time,' said he, 'so high as zero, which is *fifty* degrees below the freezing point.' These were his own words. He knows better than all this; but he loves to excite wonder. Fahrenheit's thermometer never since Mr. Jefferson existed was at twenty degrees below zero in Paris. It was never for six weeks together so low as twenty degrees above zero. Nor is Fahrenheit's zero fifty degrees below the freezing point."— pp. 330, 331.

The Journal when in Holland tells a story of Mr. Jefferson, which is perhaps characteristic enough of his eccentric philosophy to be inserted here :—

“Cutting told us of Mr. Jefferson's instructions to the traveller Ledyard when he intended to try the passage across from Kamschatka. He was to carry nothing with him, no instruments, no books, nothing that could possibly tempt the avidity of a savage; but he was to keep the journal of his travels by pricking it with thorns upon his skin. He had a scale of a foot marked out with Indian ink, in inches and lines, upon his arm, between the elbow and the wrist. If he met any remarkable mountain or other object, of which he wished to know the latitude, he was to cut him a stick of three feet long, and in the same spot mark the length of its shadow by the rising and setting sun, and then by the point of intersection drawn from the extremity of the two shadows, he would find the length of the shadow at noon, whence the latitude might be collected. If he came across a river, and wished to measure its width, he was to plant a stick at some station upon the bank, then, with another stick, horizontally level his eye at the opposite bank; after which, turning round his stick and preserving it at the same angle, take a sight with it at some object on the bank where he stood and measure the distance, which would, of course, give him that across the river. Cutting was in ecstasies while he told all this. Poor Ledyard was stopped on his travels at Tobolsk, and afterwards died at Grand Cairo, on another journey into Abyssinia. But had he pursued his northwest road, whatever benefit his success might have procured to mankind, his journal upon his skin would not, I think, have been worth much.”—p. 457.

Mr. Adams was not only most conscientiously regular in his attendance at the Senate, but he took a constant part in the debates. As he belonged during the first years of his service to the small minority of the Federalists, his actual influence was not great, and his propositions and amendments generally voted down; but he uplifted his voice on all important questions, although he had himself a very modest opinion of his capacity as an orator or a debater. In view of the great skill he acquired and displayed in his parliamentary career, when he went into the House after losing his election in 1829, it is odd to read such self-lamentations as the following :—

“I felt most sensibly my deficiency as an extemporaneous speaker. In tracing this deficiency to its source, I find it arising from a source that is irreparable. No efforts, no application on my part can ever remove it. It is slowness of comprehension, — an incapacity to grasp the whole compass of a subject in the mind at once with such an arrangement as leaves a proper impression of the detail, — an incapacity to form ideas properly precise and definite with the rapidity necessary to give them uninterrupted utterance.” — pp. 331, 332.

And again :—

“My defects of elocution are incurable; and amidst so many better

speakers, when the debates are to be reported, I never speak without mortification. The process of reasoning in my mind is too *slow* for uninterrupted articulation. My thoughts arise at first confused, and require *time* to shape into a succession of sentences. Hence the transition from thought to thought is awkward and inelegant, and expression often fails me to accomplish a sentence commenced ; so that I often begin a thought with spirit and finish it with nonsense. The chain of my argument often escapes me, and when lost can seldom be retrieved. I then finish as I can, without producing half the arguments I proposed before I began to speak. These faults would be so overpowering that I should sink into perpetual silence, from mere impotence, were it not that sometimes in the ardor of debate, when my feelings are wound up to a high tone, elocution pours itself along with unusual rapidity, and I have passages which would not shame a good speaker : this is the only thing that makes me tolerable to others or to myself."

No words could better describe the sensations of those persons who feel, like Addison, that they "could draw bills for a thousand pounds, though they have not a guinea in their pocket." And his example may give them encouragement to hope that the mental or physical impediment from which they suffer may not be insuperable, when they consider the marvellous power and skill as a debater which Mr. Adams developed in the great field-days, when he held his own against all comers, and, single-handed, routed the armies of the aliens.

Mr. Adams acted in general with the Federal party till nearly the close of his term. He voted in 1806 for the Non Importation Act, which was the beginning of Mr. Jefferson's war with England by commercial restrictions. It was far from well-pleasing to his political associates, and gave rise to strong suspicions as to his trustworthiness ; but it was not received as a final breach with them. This was reserved for his assent to the Embargo Act of December 18, 1807. On that day, famous in our history, Mr. Jefferson sent to the Senate the shortest Message known in our annals, consisting of two sentences, reciting the dangers to our commerce and seamen from the European wars, and recommending "an inhibition of the departure of our vessels from the ports of the United States." The Message and the accompanying documents were referred to a committee, of which Mr. Adams was one. His account of its proceedings, now first known, is as follows : —

"After the papers were read, Mr. Anderson moved their reference to a select committee of five. They were accordingly appointed — Smith of Maryland, Anderson, Bradley, Gregg, and myself. We immediately went into the committee room ; and, after some discussion, in which I suggested very strong doubts as to the propriety of the measure, upon the papers sent with the President's message, I finally acquiesced in it, as a compliance with

the special call for it in the message. I enquired whether there were other reasons for it besides the diplomatic papers sent with the message, as *they* appeared to me utterly inadequate to warrant such a measure. Smith, the chairman, said that the President wanted it to aid him in the negotiation with England, upon which Mr. Rose is coming out — and that *perhaps it might enable us to get rid of the Non-Importation Act*. I yielded. But I believe there are yet other reasons, which Smith did not tell. There was no other opposition in committee. Some question was made whether we should report a resolution or a bill. The last was concluded on; and, as we thought it would be necessary to found some other measures upon these papers, we agreed to report *in part*. The bill was reported, and after passing to the second reading, on the motion to read it the second time this day, Mr. White interposed his negative. Smith moved then to suspend the twelfth rule for three days; which was carried. At the second reading the bill was strongly opposed by Messrs. Hillhouse, Sumter, and Pickering; and partially by Mr. Crawford, the new member from Georgia, who wanted time. The yeas and nays were taken three times — at the second reading, twenty-two to seven; on a motion to postpone the third reading until to-morrow, twenty-two and six; and on the passage of the bill, twenty-two and six. On the last two votes General Sumter had left his seat. We sent the bill to the House, and then adjourned. The House did not get through with it this day. It was almost six o'clock when I got home."

The report was made, what debate there was, despatched, and the bill passed through all its stages in four hours from the time the Message was received. Mr. Adams voted with the majority throughout, and supported the measure briefly, as appears from the proceedings of the Senate. "The President," he said, "has recommended this measure on his high authority. I would not consider; I would not deliberate; I would act. Doubtless the President possesses such further information as will justify the measure."

This act separated Mr. Adams at once and forever from the Federal party. It is not easy to imagine the storm of indignation with which his action was met in Massachusetts and wherever Federalism prevailed. Not Tyler, not Johnson, was denounced more bitterly of later days, than was he by the party he had left. His conduct was attributed to the basest and most sordid motives; and many of the leading Federalists never changed their opinions to the end of their lives. This was inevitable, and what Mr. Adams must have known to be so. When any man enters upon a career of political success immediately upon a change of sides, the party he has left will be slow to give him much credit for disinterested public virtue. When Sergeant Copley left the Whigs for the Tories, and proceeded from the Solicitor and Attorney Generalships to the Mastership of the Rolls and the Chancellorship, we apprehend few Whigs doubted that he

had the Woolsack in his eye from the first. So, when his vote on the Embargo led Mr. Adams to Russia and to England, to the Commissionership of Ghent, to the Secretaryship of State, and to the Presidency, there were not many old Federalists who did not believe that the White House was in his thoughts when he first went over to the enemy. Still there were Federalists, even of the straitest sect, who did not join in the cry, and were willing to excuse his course on the ground of a constitutional idiosyncrasy for thinking and acting for himself. Whatever his motives may have been, his vote on the Embargo was what gave him his after-career. Immediately on the accession of Mr. Madison, he received the mission to Russia; then he was made one of the Commissioners who made the Treaty of Ghent, then Minister to England, then Secretary of State, and then President. Had he remained in the Federal party, he could have had none of these good things, and his career would have been confined to Massachusetts, who would doubtless have given him whatever she had to bestow. At this distance of time, however, even those who hold the worst opinion of his motives in 1807, if any such there be, may forgive the commencement of a career without which the world would have wanted the final glory which crowned it. There was not much in the diplomatic or ministerial or Presidential life of Mr. Adams to impress itself upon the imagination and daily memory of posterity. He was a diligent, hard-working, honest man of business, with little to distinguish him from the herd of ministers and secretaries and presidents whom we are already comfortably forgetting. But his public career, culminating in the Presidency, was what made the last illustrious eighteen years of his life possible. His great parliamentary career from 1830 to 1848, when he fell on the field of so many well-fought battles with the slave oligarchy, is what will make his name a household word as long as the Republic endures. But all this belongs to him who shall sum up the history of Mr. Adams when the whole of his Memoirs shall be given to the public.

The mechanical execution of the work is good; but there are altogether too many misprints, which we are willing to accept as a judgment on the editor for having a work of this character and importance published in Philadelphia instead of Boston. E. Q.